

# THE RIO NEWS.

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NUMBER 25

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## THE RIO SÃO FRANCISCO.

The following communication from the commission now examining the upper São Francisco will give our readers a good idea of the character of that great river and of the country through which it runs. As the commission had just entered upon its work, the subject is dealt with in general terms rather than in detail.

AYALHO, Pernambuco,  
September 7, 1869.

The Rio São Francisco is now at a low stage, it having fallen in places to within one and one-half or two feet of its extreme low water of last season, and is still gradually falling. All the tributaries that have been crossed up to this place are dry, and the daily evaporation and the natural, constant lowering of the supply from its sources necessarily reduces the volume of the flow here, and at all points along the stream. There has been no regular flowing water in the large tributaries, we are told, for over three years, yet it is obvious from the water marks that at times they discharge large volumes of water. There is, however, at the very lowest stage of the river, an immense quantity of water passing to the sea.

The important favorable feature of the upper São Francisco is its abundant supply of water, even in the very driest seasons. In times of great floods the river rises at this place about thirty feet. At such times there is a volume of water at least half a mile wide with an average depth of about forty feet, and running at the rate of not less than four miles an hour—or, in round numbers, a flow of not less than thirty-seven millions (37,000,000) of cubic feet. If the low-water flow is only one-tenth of the high-water flow, it will still be a very large volume.

The falls of the Paulo Afonso though unlike the falls of Niagara, presents some of the same general, grand characteristics. In a distance of less than one mile the fall is 250 feet; in forty miles on this part of the river it is 500 feet, and in 147 miles it is 755 feet. The quantity of water now passing is only about one-eighth of the quantity which rushes over this great fall during the rainy season. At such times the scenes viewed from different points along the falls must be surpassingly beautiful and grand. The Paulo Afonso would be far more difficult and costly to overcome by a canal and locks than Niagara. The latter, though carefully surveyed by the United States government about forty years ago, still remains undisturbed by man's improving hand. The government of Brazil has adopted the proper plan of passing the most difficult portion of these falls by a millroad, 72 miles long, now under construction.

We have as yet seen too little of the upper São Francisco to form any opinion in regard to the mode or modes of improving its low-water navigation. At the "Redonda" rapids, the only one between Jatobá and Ataíto, the main channel has a good width and depth, the only trouble is occasioned by the swiftness of the current, which renders it somewhat difficult for loaded canoes to ascend. Properly-constructed, stern-wheel steamers can ascend it easily. Above here navigation is excellent for a distance of four leagues to the "Itacatara" rapids where, according to Halfeld, there is ample depth with a current of three miles an hour, which should offer no material obstacle to steamboat navigation. Above these rapids, the navigation is free for eleven leagues to the "Vão" rapids, at the island of Sorobabé.

The "Cachoeira do Vão" and the series of falls and rapids for a distance of about two leagues are not so formidable as we expected to find them. These falls are pronounced by engineers Halfeld and Krauss to be the most difficult on the upper São Francisco. There is no low-water steamboat navigation over them at the present time, but with the large quantity of water always at command it is certain that a fair channel for steamboats, without locks, can be made there. Were there a body of water only equal to the low-water flow of

the Ohio river, these rapids could not be made navigable in low water without the aid of locks.

The great superiority of the Ohio for navigation, for two thirds of the year, with a less quantity of water, arises from its comparatively slight declivity, averaging only about six inches per mile between Pittsburgh and Cairo, and twelve inches per mile between Pittsburgh and Wheeling. In 945 miles of the upper São Francisco, the river falls 1,087 feet, so that the declivity averages 1.15 feet per mile, or considerably more than double the average declivity of the Ohio. But on its first 177 miles, the São Francisco falls only 143 feet, or nine and one-half inches per mile, which is less than the declivity of the Ohio above Wheeling. On the next 429 miles, it falls 462 feet, or thirteen inches per mile; but this includes some greater rapids than are in the Ohio, except the one at Louisville where locks are used.

If there were the same quantity of water in the Ohio that is in the São Francisco during its low stages, its navigation would be open all the year, except when obstructed by ice. At the junction of the Rio das Velhas with the São Francisco, over eleven hundred miles from the sea, the minimum quantity of water in dry seasons is six times the minimum quantity at Pittsburgh, 907 miles from the mouth of the Ohio.

Most of the rapids in the upper Ohio consist of beds of gravel, while on the São Francisco the beds are of solid rock. In great floods the São Francisco becomes muddy like the Ohio when in flood, and from the same general cause—the denudation of the alluvial portions of the valley and river banks by rain. The channels for the passage of canoes and barges on the upper São Francisco are in general more permanent than are those of the upper Ohio, though the sand-bars of the São Francisco shift somewhat in different floods. For five hundred miles continuously, the São Francisco is freely navigable for vessels of five feet draft, or more. Above and below this stretch of open river, improvements are needed at the rapids, although canoes pass everywhere excepting at the great falls of the Paulo Afonso.

There is one distinctive characteristic of the São Francisco—a daily wind blowing up the river sufficiently strong to carry large and canoes against the average river currents. On the lower São Francisco sails are used on all the larger and canoes, great and small; but, strange to say, heretofore miles farther up the river sails have never been used. This part of the valley, however, has less river trade than any other portion. A few hundred miles above much larger canoes and barges are used than here.

It is easier to compare the two rivers—the Ohio and the São Francisco—than it is to compare their valleys, the features are so entirely different; climatical, geological, botanical, zoological, and meteorological. The upper part of the upper São Francisco we have not yet visited, but with the maps of Halfeld's and Krauss' surveys and the descriptions and explanations of those who have seen the entire valley, a good judgment of the whole can be formed.

The distinctive characteristic of the valley for hundreds of miles is its deficient rain-fall. It rains; but not as does along the valley of the Ohio where suffering from drought is comparatively unknown. Even if it rained similarly, the effect would not be the same on account of the radical difference of climate. Here this entire valley is in a tropical region, ranging from  $10^{\circ}$  to  $20^{\circ}$  south latitude, while the Ohio is in the temperate climate due to  $38^{\circ}$  to  $40^{\circ}$  north latitude. Here the evaporation, nearly at all times, is enormous; an ordinary rain will scarcely create flowing water, and a few hours of sunshine dissipates the moisture on the surface. The side streams as far as we have ascended the valley, which elsewhere might be tributaries to the main stream, are entirely dry; and sometimes, great drouths such as they now have, they are without flowing water for several years. The main

stream, however, ceaselessly continues carrying through this large valley a vast volume of pure water which to this date has been used only for very limited navigation, and for the domestic needs of the people settled along its banks. There is scarcely any semblance between the valleys of the Ohio and the São Francisco either naturally or in regard to the improvements made by the hands of men.

There is a resemblance, however, between the lower Nile and the São Francisco, arising from climatical resemblances. Along the lower Nile it never rains, the sun has great power, the soil is sandy and thirsty as it is here, and for fifteen hundred miles above it there is no tributary adding to the flow of the main river. There is a difference, too, for here the side streams during the rainy season sometimes pour great floods of water into the parent stream; but this difference is more in name than in any substantial beneficial effects, for almost as soon as the rains cease the tributaries cease to flow, not having sufficient areas of elevated mountains to furnish a liberal supply for any considerable length of time. Many of the ranges, called mountains, along this part of the valley are only a thousand feet, or less, above the river, and on both sides they are merely long, gently undulating plains. The whole country along this part of the valley is a sort of plateau; not flat, but laid out into rolling hills and valleys, whose characteristic is dryness and a comparatively limited vegetation.

It is not, therefore, precisely like the valley of the lower Nile, because their vegetation does not naturally exist save only where the ground may have been watered by the river, and all agricultural products depend solely upon irrigation. Here the inhabitants who live along the river have a small amount of marginal cultivation on the alluvial slopes of the banks, after the subsidence of the annual floods. However fertile the soil does not remain upon the banks of the banks, a few feet higher, it remains without cultivation because it can not be worked profitably without irrigation, and the people have not yet reached that point.

But here again is another difference. The immediate valley of the Nile lies low, and large areas are subject to yearly inundations which bring them fertility. Here for the most part, the top margin of the sloping river banks are as high, or higher, than the greatest floods of the present day, and the people, contented with very little, are satisfied to cultivate the narrow sloping banks on a small scale without artificial irrigation. At the same time, they pasture some cattle, sheep and goats in the *serra*, or scattering woods, a little way back from the river.

These characteristics of the São Francisco valley, the marginal cultivation without irrigation aided by inland pastures, are absent along the lower Nile; they are advantages which nature has conferred upon this region through the rains which usually occur here, but which do not occur along the Nile.

The trees of the *serra* are mostly small, and the cactus, here a tree sometimes a foot or more in diameter and thirty feet high, is quite as abundant as any other. The soil is, for the most part, stony or gravelly, though it varies in different localities. In some of the gentle valleys a few miles back from the river, earthen dams have been thrown across which store large quantities of water during copious rains. These serve to keep the people and their cattle, sheep, hogs and goats supplied during the dry time, which is a large portion of every year.

Irrigation in the valley of the São Francisco, though not indispensable for a sparse population, will be found necessary for its proper, substantial development. There are areas of good soil in many places beginning at the highest part of the alluvial deposit and extending back with a very gentle ascent for half a mile or more, which admit of irrigation from the river. The circumstances being different, it cannot be done in

precisely the same manner which prevails in lower Egypt, but there is an enormous wind-power for pumping going to waste, as also an unsurpassed water-power at the rapids of the river. With an abundance of water at command, small irrigating canals of almost any descent that may be desired, can be made, into which the water can be pumped at intervals and allowed to flow into the distributing ditches. The people in general who are now here, can, not, or will not do this, for two reasons: one, that they are scarcely able; the other, that up to the present time there has not been sufficient inducement to raise much more than the moderate amount needed for each family, their natural outlet to the markets of the world being broken by the impassable falls of the Paulo Afonso. Had there been a smooth navigation to the seaport of these falls and rapids, enterprising men would probably have entered this valley and introduced improvements of various kinds; but hitherto there has been no adequate inducement for such men to settle here.

If the two navigations—the upper and lower São Francisco—present as distinct and separate, and almost as unknown to each other as the antipodes, are connected by a railway, and the upper navigation is improved so as to accommodate and cheapen the river transit, there will be some inducement to develop the capabilities of this extensive valley. Certainly, in the absence of these facilities, they never will be fully developed. Even with them the process will be comparatively slow because the climate is almost too warm to entice men accustomed to temperate regions to locate here, unless they can have good assurance of certain and liberal returns upon their money and labor. Such assurance experience shows will carry men and money almost anywhere.

Undoubtedly there are large areas in the great valley of the São Francisco which are not and never will be able; but there are other large areas which need only water to make them yield abundantly with proper cultivation. Probably there has never yet been any regular farming in this entire region. It is doubtful whether a pup has ever been brought into the valley, certainly not along this portion of it. Irrigation from the river for a distance of more than a thousand miles, even on an average width of one mile, would give one thousand square miles, or 64,000 acres, which divided into eighty-acre tracts along the river, would make 8,000 farms. At present the little patches of cultivation along the sloping banks are so small and comparatively insignificant as scarcely to be worth counting by acres, or as anything more than annual gardens for eking out provision for each family.

The irrigation of even half a million acres of productive soil along the margin of the river should lead to a considerable surplus for exportation, and this of course would in turn augment the importation correspondingly. Other industries would also spring up in consequence of improved facilities of transportation.

Very little, it seems, has yet been attempted away from the immediate river valley toward developing the natural resources of this part of the country. It is not yet known what may be accomplished by intelligent, well-directed labor; and it never will be known unless a suitable and cheap commercial highway can be secured by the improvement of the river and by making the best connection with tide-water that the case will admit—which is by the railway now under construction around the falls of the Paulo Afonso.

It is said that the valley is more fertile and has a better climate for agriculture farther up the stream. There are reasons why this should be so. The upper valley is ten degrees farther from the equator and is more elevated; that should make the climate more equable. It is a thousand miles nearer to the mountain sources, that should give it a better supply of rain, more available for agricultural purposes from tributary branches and springs, more extensive forests. It should be more nearly allied to the characteristics of the temperate zone. That region, heretofore has, had very little to encourage enterprise, excepting that pertaining to gold and diamond mining; and this sort of industry, of itself, never did and never can develop any country. Whatever may be its natural capabilities, there has been thus far very little if any inducement to develop them.

## THE RIO NEWS

PUBLISHED TRIMONTHLY

on the eve of departure of the American packet,  
the French packet of the 15th, and royal  
Mail packet of the 24th, of the month,

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Subscriptions now received to the 1st. of January, 1870.

All subscriptions must run with the calendar year.

Back numbers supplied at this office from April 1st, 1870.

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RIO DE JANEIRO, OCTOBER 5TH, 1879

We give in another column the reply of the prime minister, Conselheiro Siminbú, to the various inquiries addressed to him on the subject of Chinese immigration. The speech is one of more than ordinary interest at this time, not only because of its partial exposition of the government's policy in relation to introducing the Chinese into Brazil but also because of its expression of a clearly-defined purpose on the part of the government to use this element to bolster up the decaying great proprietorships of Brazil. Notwithstanding our respect for Conselheiro Siminbú and our belief in his sincerity in this matter, we must beg leave to differ with him in regard to the policy of introducing the Chinese into Brazil. These people will come only as a servile element of labor, an element that will bring unmeasured disaster to the prosperity of the country. In bringing them here, the government will simply be prolonging the evils now afflicting us.

WILLIAMSON it is the practice of the S. João d'El Rey Mining Company to anticipate a given number of the negroes annually.

It is hereby mutually agreed between the directors of the said company and the directors of The Brazilian Company, that a like number of the negroes belonging to the last-named company, shall from the date hereof be likewise annually liberated, without prejudice to the agreement subsisting between the two companies dated 27th of June, 1845.

Dated, London, 28th day of July, 1857.—  
R. HICHENS, Directors of Bra.  
F. L. VAN ZELLER, Directors of Bra.  
J. A. L. V. ZELLER, Directors of Bra.  
The italics are ours. It does not seem necessary to enlarge upon this point; our readers can readily judge for themselves just how far this instrument "suspended and changed" the contract of 1845. The other point—that which refers to the slaves as "objects," not "parties" in these contracts—is one which a humane man will feel little inclined to discuss. It is difficult to believe that any Englishman would seriously offer such a defense, even were it justified in law. If it be true that the object of a contract can not appeal to the courts for the enforcement of those provisions of the instrument relating to himself, then all the statutes relating to the emancipation of slaves in Brazil are futile. We can not conceive a more unjust provision of law than the hypothetical one upon which this strange defense is made. We do not believe that the defendant of the Morro Velho company is quite prepared to carry this argument to its logical conclusion by excluding the "objects" of all legal instruments, such as contracts, wills, deeds, etc., from full and free recourse to the courts; and if not, then it must be his intention to place the slave in the same category with horses and mules—a position which is radically antagonistic to the civilized sentiment of the day, and to the social and political institutions of Brazil. In continuation of this subject we shall shortly call attention to other cases, as the "Morro das Almas" slaves, where hired blacks have been kept in illegal slavery by this same company.

The bishop of Pará has taken an uncompromising stand against the Nazareth festa. The directors of the civil fete, however, announce a subscription of 7,120\$ and it is confidently asserted that it will be more brilliant and imposing than in any previous year.

A correspondent of a provincial paper in São Paulo, writing from Fazenda, says that Major Vicente de Oliveira Trindade e Melo, living in the parish of S. Sebastião do Tijucão Petró, has discovered a large mine of coal on his fazenda. He carried specimens to Fazenda where it was pronounced to be coal of a superior quality. For the sake of a change we trust that the "find!" is genuine one; the fiction "find" of coal have become distressingly frequent all over the empire.

THE SECOND réply to the charges made against the S. João d'El Rey company for illegally holding a large number of blacks in slavery has appeared, and is quite as unsatisfactory as the first. It is largely, very largely devoted to the establishment of its legal right to hire the slaves of other parties—a point which has been contested, neither in this column nor in the debate on this question in the Chamber of Deputies. These points are purely and simply side issues which have no bearing whatever upon the grave charge which has been made against the company. The only question which now interests the public relates to the present status of the Cata Branca blacks—why does the author of this second defense say "Cata Preta" instead of "Cata Branca?"

—And that settled, the subsequent question of a just settlement of all legally-established claims will naturally follow. We are pleased to notice, however, that this second defense offers two tangible reasons why these blacks are still held in slavery: one, that they are so held under the "contract" of 1845 which "superseded and changed" that of 1845; the other, that "in both the contracts the slaves in question were not parties, but were merely objects of those contracts, therefore they can not invoke the alleged right to their freedom." To the first—and we fear that the author of this defense has become somewhat entangled in his case either through ignorance of the document referred to, or through an unwise presumption that it was unknown to us—as in this, we have only to call attention to the so-called agreement itself. It is an unsafe policy to refer to imaginary or fragmentary documents as evidence, and as this is the first time that the company has based its defense upon the "contract" of 1845, and that it was not produced before the judge at Sabará nor filed in the *autos* for manifest reasons, we will endeavor to supply the deficiency by giving it entire.

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### LEGISLATIVE NOTES.

—The General Assembly has been further protracted to the 15th of the present month. It is evident that the prime minister, Conselheiro Siminbú, was decidedly in earnest when he remarked in his reply to an interpolation on the 24th ult.: "The ministry is seriously pledged to the realization of electoral reform; it is one of the principal measures of its program, or rather it is its principal programme. It is disposed to employ all the means which the laws and the constitution afford to see this realized. I have already said, and again repeat, that it is the intention of the government to employ all the constitutional means at its disposal to the end that the sessions of parliament shall not be interrupted before the solution of this great question."

—The State has accompanied considerable work since our last issue, the accumulated heat weather, the announced purpose of the government to confine the legislature until the prescribed work is done, and the gigantic character of these prolonged sessions, all acting as a spur to its industry. The project for the appointment of a commission to examine into the management of the national finances, during the recess of the General Assembly, and report at its next session, received a favorable report on the 22nd ult., but with an amendment making the commission permanent and requiring reports at all sessions. On the same day the Chamber till granting tariff exemption upon building materials from the proposed edifice for the Postageless Library and museum received a favorable committee report. The Amazon subsidiary bill has continued to be the subject of discussion, with the monotonous rehearsal of the new worn *versos e sons*. The treasury estimates have been under languid discussion and passed to the second reading on the 30th. The supplementary credit for the new *abastor* passed on the 24th, with the Chamber amendments. The bill has passed to its third reading.

—Thus far, there has been little opposition to it in the Senate, and the bill will undoubtedly pass at an early date. Senator Silveira Lobo's project for the suspension of the Paráhina senatorial election received an affirmative committee report on the 26th, and it was not produced before the judge at Sabará nor filed in the *autos* for manifest reasons, we will endeavor to supply the deficiency by giving it entire.

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—The report of the Senate budget committee on the general revenue of the empire for the year 1879-80 was presented on the 27th ult. In the committee's estimate the total receipts were placed at 102,800,000\$, a sum largely below the ordinary expenses of the public departments. During its consideration in the Chamber this sum was increased to 117,073,800\$. Through a great many new sources of income. This increase, however, comes from the hands of the Senate committee in a greatly reduced form, and the total amount recommended now stands at 114,808,000\$, which leaves an estimated surplus over the reduced expenditures of 370,000\$. Among the items from which the committee proposes to realize this increase over the official estimates are: import duties, dispatch of free goods, warehouse tax, dock tax, post office, Dom Pedro II railway, telegraph messages, stamp tax, tax on property transfers, business and professional licenses, sale of government property, transportation tax, and an additional tax on slaves. As the budget has been greatly changed in many particulars from both the original and the Chamber bills, it will undoubtedly occasion considerable discussion and further changes before its final adoption, at which time we shall give a *résumé* of it as passed. In subsequent discussions the minister of finance has accepted some of the committee's alterations, and rejected others.

—In view of the fact that the General Assembly is now working in sessions extended from day to day by the government, the daily *résumé* of the work accomplished in the Chamber has become conspicuous because of its monotony. Some idea can be obtained from the fact that no sessions were held on the 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th and 31st inst. In the three sessions since our last report the Rio de Janeiro gas contract has been under discussion and has passed to its second reading. Saldanha Marinho has succeeded in bringing his bill for the secularization of cemeteries into discussion, where it has passed to its second reading. On the 26th inst. Joaquim Nabuco called the attention of the Chamber to the fact that no response had yet been made to his interpolation on the Morro Velho case. He urged that these blacks were held in illegal slavery, and it was therefore urgent that the government should attend to this interpellation.

—The project for extending public aid to agriculture passed its third reading in the Chamber on the 22nd ult. The project provides for the establishment of a bank, law of Nov. 6, 1875, authorized to loan money on mortgage security on these conditions: the rate of interest shall not exceed seven per cent, with redemption varying from five to sixty years; the establishment of branches in various provincial cities is optional, but subject to certain conditions, a reserve shall be established from a fixed percentage of the net profits; the duration of the bank shall be 99 years; loans may be made upon property during the first five years to the extent of one fifth of its capital, after which this class of loans shall cease unless the government shall extend the time five years more at the end of which term the loans shall be confined exclusively to rural property. If the government shall fail to establish this bank within one year from the date of this law, it is authorized to concede a guarantee of six per cent. interest upon private banking associations

upon the following conditions: the total capital for which the government assumes responsibility shall not exceed 50,000,000\$, distributed as follows, in Rio de Janeiro 15,000,000\$, Bahia 10,000,000\$, Pernambuco 10,000,000\$, Minas 3,000,000\$, the dispositions of the law of Nov. 6, 1875, shall be applicable wherever possible; all transactions shall be made in current money of the country.

—The finance committee of the Chamber recommended on the 29th that the government grant exemption of duties on all books, maps, models, and scientific instruments imported by the Companhia Literária society in the province of Pará. The measure in itself is an excellent one; but why not make it general? Why keep a law on the statute books which necessitates constant appeals to the legislature for exemption from its stringent and unwise provisions?

### PROVINCIAL NOTES.

—Hail storms are reported from Paraná.

—Low water is reported from the Peruvian Amazon.

—Frolics on a small scale reported on the lower Amazon.

—The city of Manaus is to be lighted by the "globe gas" system.

—Two counterfeitors have recently been arrested in Rio Grande do Sul.

—The recently established tramway line in Campinas is said to be meeting with flattering success.

—The city of Pernambuco is seeking capital, through the means of a loan, to carry on various public works.

—The Manaus custom house receipts during the month of August were 8,238\$, and the internal revenue receipts were 60,344\$.

—A movement is now on foot in Para for the organization of an art and industrial exposition. The scheme is meeting with much favor.

—The president of Rio Grande do Norte has called an extraordinary session of the provincial assembly to meet on the 10th inst.

—The Constituent of São Paulo reports the attack by Indians upon some laborers on the Batálha river, resulting in the death of three of the latter.

—The Misericórdia brotherhood of São Paulo are proposing to erect a new edifice in that city. Different plans are now under consideration.

—Late advices from Manaus report the arrival of Dr. Edward S. Raith and Mr. Ernest Morris, who are making explorations of the upper Amazon.

—Late advices from Guyana report incursions of the Cayapo Indians into Rio Branco, where they have done great damage to some of the fazendas.

—Late reports from the island of Fernando de Noronha state that the harvest is abundant, and the rains since July have given favorable assurances of the future.

—On the 6th ult. the American ship *Antelope* from San Francisco, called at the island of Fernando de Noronha to repair some slight damages. She sailed for Liverpool on the 9th.

—The number of deaths from small pox in Fortaleza from August 2, 1878, to August 31, 1879, reported to the authorities, was 27,116. The disease is now declared to be extinct.

—We learn from the *Comércio do Amazonas* that the English steamer *Theotis* has run aground in the Madeira river, and that, owing to the falling of the river which has left the vessel almost on dry ground, she can not be extricated until next year. *Theotis* has a cargo of about 600 arrobas of rubber.

—At a meeting of some prominent citizens of São Paulo on the 6th ult., the preliminary steps were taken toward the organization of an association for the establishment of a colony which shall devote itself to the culture of cotton on a large scale. The enterprise receives the hearty support of the *Brasil* press.

—The president of Paraná, who is now visiting various parts of his province, reports that the emancipation of the Nova Itália colony is an accomplished fact. He speaks of this colony as having good roads, lands generally fertile, considerable culture principally of sugar cane and corn, and markets near at hand.

—The American brigantine *Katie*, Captain Partridge, called at Fernando de Noronha on the 16th ult. The captain brought letters from the Brazilian minister to the United States asking that he might be permitted to inspect the islands of this penal colony. The request was granted and Captain Partridge remained until the evening of the 18th.

—The Dutch brig *Wilhelm van der Woort*, Captain Jasch, from Glasgow with a cargo of machinery, etc., was wrecked on the Aracajú (Ceard) bar on the 30th of August. The disaster was caused by the wind dying out just as the vessel was crossing the bar, leaving her to the mercy of the current. It is reported that the vessel and cargo are a total loss.

—Advices from Rio Grande do Sul report great damage along the shores of Lagos dos Patos in the municipalities of Viamão, Cipriápolis and Palmares, owing to an extraordinary rise of water in the lake. A strong southeast wind having prevailed for several days, the water of the lake was banked up at its northern extremity to a height of over nine feet. All the fazendas along the northern shores suffered great injuries from the water.

—During the month of August the number of vessels crossing the Rio Grande was inward 40; outward 53. The nationality of the arrivals was, Brazil 21; British 8; Dutch, Italian, Spanish, 2 each; American, Danish, German, Norwegian and Portuguese, 1 each. Of the departures there were Brazilian 20; British and German, 7 each; Danish and Portuguese, 5 each; French and Norwegian, 3 each; American, Dutch and Italian, 1 each.

—A fire broke out in the Itabira (Minas Gerais) cotton mills a couple of weeks ago, and destroyed cotton and other property to the value of ten or twelve thousand milreis. The fire was caused by sparks blown through the ventilators from clearings that were being burned off in the vicinity. The owners of the mill might have easily prevented this accident by keeping a hose on the ground that could have been connected with the tank that supplies the turbine. Fortunately no serious damage was done to the machinery, and the mill will be at work again in a few days.

—The commission for studying the cane disease in Pernambuco has made an examination of the fields of the engenho Garapá which is one of those suffering most from this cause. Here it found the plant completely invaded. But few stalks were found which did not present the characteristic symptoms of the disease. The commission states that it found no signs of a degeneration of the cane itself, on the contrary it appeared to have grown vigorously up to the time it was attacked. The only explanation of the cause of the disease was found to be larvae of lepidoptera, some of which were found at work, others in the chrysalis state.

—A recent letter from Ubá, Minas Gerais, states that on the night of the 1st ultimo, twelve notorious criminals, nearly all murderers, escaped from the prison at that place. The prison is in a wretched condition and the police authorities are powerless in the matter, as the force is insufficient and the *delegado* and his assistants are fazendeiros living outside the place. It is the third escape during the present year. Considering the state of society in Minas Gerais, it is quite time that better provisions for enforcing the law should be provided, than appears to have been in Ubá.

### THE CATA BRANCA BLACKS

The Ouro Preto correspondent of the *Jornal do Comércio*, in his Minas Gerais letter of the 20th ult., devotes considerable attention to the Cata Branca blacks, now held in illegal slavery at the Morro Velho mines. Among other things he says:

As to the case having been taken up for the liberating of these slaves and its still pending in the courts of Subárd, what I know is in *resume* as follows:

The guardian appointed for these slaves made a requisition for the deposit of the same, about 170. This regulation having been granted by the judge, the Morro Velho company opposed it. The judge having insisted upon the deposit, the company appealed to the court of appeals of this city (Ouro Preto), which sustained the decision of the judge, and directed the guardian to be paid in the form of decree 5133 of Nov. 13, 1872. This was more than a year ago, and up to this day, in spite of the fact that this case is a summary one, and involving the liberty of so many persons so long held in slavery, the affair is paralyzed. Detractors say that the guardian has become so *apathetic* that he will do nothing against the rich and powerful company. But this I cannot believe, not only because such an act would be an unqualified piece of meanness; and I must presume the guardian to be an honest man, but also because the honored Salazar would certainly not be party to any such scandal. In the meanwhile the delay in the decision of this question has already surpassed all reasonable limits, and it is nothing more than right that the government should give it the attention and interest that the case merits and which it is exciting in public opinion. It would be well also for the British Legation in the capital of the empire to take some step in this matter. A legation representing a nation which boasts so much of philanthropy and humanity should not be indifferent to this subject. It is a matter of no less importance than the liberation of what remains of 385 unfortunate persons, who, by the violation of contracts, of English rights and of Brazilian laws, have been reduced to slavery by subjects of Her Britannic Majesty. This is a self-evident truth.

We are glad to say that the British Legation takes the liveliest interest in this matter. We can assure the *Jornal do Comércio* that the case stands in a very different light than when the previous, unsupported charges were made.—Eds. News-J.

The balance sheet of the Recife railway during the month of August is as follows: receipts, 58,385\$140; expenses, 33,774\$331. The number of passengers carried was 12,618%, including 658 on government account. The traffic during the month amounted to 33.7 tons of baggage, 2,152.9 tons of freight and 385 animals. Of the freight, 30.3 tons were of sugar and 10.7 tons of cotton. The average receipts per kilometer were 307\$73; expenses 270\$60.

—The Washington correspondent of the *New York Journal of Commerce*, under date of August 28, says: "Rear Admiral Nichols, of the flagship Hartford, in a dispatch dated Montevideo July 13, brings to the notice of the Navy Department the gallant conduct of a boat's crew of the Spanish gunboat *Cerro*, Captain Ramón Martínez y Pérez commanding. The American bark *Syrup* was driven ashore in a furious gale on June 24, off Montevideo, having parted her chains, and was in a perilous position, the tugs being unable to reach her. The boat from the *Cerro* was lowered at great risk to the lives of the crew and lines were carried to the *Syrup*. Rear Admiral Nichols addressed a letter of thanks to Captain Pérez, saying: 'Seeing the signal of distress and knowing that brother seamen were in peril, your brave people, at the risk of their lives, hastened to their succor and rendered invaluable aid.' The severity of the gale and the heavy sea made it a perilous undertaking—nobly conceived and bravely accomplished by the men under your command. This gallant exploit serves to show the sympathy which directed the courage which executed it, characteristic in all eyes of the Spanish nation.'"

## THE RIO NEWS.

The Pacific packet *Vaiparato* sailed for Brazil from Lisbon on the 27th ult.

The American packet *City of Rio de Janeiro* arrived at New York on the 26th ult.

The German packet *Hermann*, which arrived at this port on the 27th ult., brought 208 immigrants.

The Marquez do Herval, minister of war, has been suffering from a severe attack of pneumonia, and as we go to press his condition is such as to occasion the gravest fears.

We are informed that the government has granted space in the Typographia Nacional for the proposed Canadian Exhibition, to be held July to October of next year.

It has been definitely arranged that the Ferrari opera company will visit São Paulo some time during the present month. Mine. Durand and Tanguay are to go with the company.

The national steamers of the 20th and 20th ult. took several thousand of sugar cane cuttings of different varieties to Pernambuco, where the cane blight is now commencing great ravages.

We are glad to see that the new chief of police is continuing his predecessor's policy in regard to the suppression of *operaivas* in this city. In this at least there is no necessity for "studying" the matter *de nro*.

We have received a copy of the *relatório* pre-sented to the provincial assembly, now in session, by the president of this province, Dr. Americo de Moraes Marcondes da Andrade, for which we are under many obligations.

The triplicate list from which the Emperor will select a senator for the province of Minas Gerais, consists of Deputados Lino Duarte and Mariano Campos, and Conselheiro Lafayete Rodrigues Pereira, the present minister of justice.

The "Empresa Lacteira Fluminense" has been authorized to supply this city with pure milk. It will have a capital of \$600,000, and will probably depend upon some outside water supply until the completion of the new water works.

An explosion took place on board the national steamer *Aura Clara*, while crossing the bar of Santa Cruz, Espírito Santo, which caused the death of the captain, mate, the two engineers, one sailor, and a passenger. Six others were more or less injured by the explosion.

The inspector general of the new water works has notified the minister of agriculture that it will be impossible to convey water to the shipping by way of the Pavuna canal, because an examination of the canal shows that it is so filled that boats cannot ascend it. He thinks it impracticable, also, to lay a branch pipe to a place where the boats can ascend.

The American packet *City of Pardi*, Captain Carpenter, which arrived at this port on the evening of the 25th ult., brought ten cabin passengers and ten cabin passengers from intermediate ports. Her cargo consisted of 14,000 packages, including 6,000 barrels of flour. Our thanks are due to her popular purser, Dr. W. D. Spore, for late papers and various invaluable favors.

Pedro Lamas proposes, under decree No. 7,313, to buy up all the market and run them under the auspices of a company. We do not understand that chromos will be given to purchasers, nor that lottery drawings will be held in order to give consumers a chance to get their chickens and *carrapatos* for nothing, but there is evidently some advantage in the new scheme if it would not be undertaken.

During the month of September the total number of passenger arrivals at this port was 3,291, of which 1,605 came from Europe, 1,797 from the River Plate, 1,137, including 827 slaves, from the northern provinces, and 442 from the southern provinces. The number of departures was 1,365, of which 552 went to Europe, 94 to the River Plate, 262 to the northern provinces, and 652 to the southern provinces, including 193 immigrants and 22 slaves.

The minister of agriculture on the 31st ult. declared to the syndicate of French bankers that the imperial government regrets that it cannot interfere in the questions pending between them and the Brazilian Imperial Bahia Railway Company. The Brazilian government has guaranteed seven per cent. interest annually on the capital employed in the said road to the sum of \$4,000 per kilometer built, and has to do with the company only in so far as the faithful execution of the contract is concerned, and it cannot interfere in relation to the emission of mortgages or with the holders of such mortgages.

The ship *Templar*, which recently arrived in San Francisco from New York and Rio, with yellow fever on board, carries a heroine in the person of Miss Armstrong, the captain's daughter. It is represented that after Captain Armstrong was struck down with the yellow fever, Miss Armstrong, assisted by the second mate, navigated the ship, the young lady frequently taking her attack at the wheel; and it is said by many on board that, had it not been for the united exertions of the two, the vessel would never have reached San Francisco. Miss Armstrong is barely 20 years of age.—*Liverpool Weekly Mercury*, August 30.

## COMMERCIAL.

## EXCHANGE.

September 23.—Transacções insignificantes at the same rates, viz.—1/4 centavo, and 21 1/2 and 21 1/2 mercantile Sovereigns held at \$18,350 with 1/4 centavo offered.

September 24.—Rates on London unchanged. Mercantile rates on Paris 441 pt. per franc.

September 25.—Rates on London remain at 21 1/2 both for banking and mercantile paper. On Paris banking rates 444, mercantile 441 pt. per franc. Sovereign held at \$18,350 with 1/4 centavo offered.

September 26.—Rates unchanged.

September 27.—Rates on London remain at 21 1/2 both for banking and mercantile paper. On Paris banking rates 444, mercantile 441 pt. per franc. Sovereign held at \$18,350 with 1/4 centavo offered.

September 28.—Rates unchanged. Sovereign held at \$18,350 with 1/4 centavo offered.

September 29.—Very few transactions at 21 1/2 for banking paper and 21 1/2 and 21 1/2 mercantile. Mercantile rates on Paris 441 pt. per franc. Sovereign held at \$18,350 with 1/4 centavo offered.

October 1.—Limited transactions at the same rates as yesterday. Banking rates on Hamburg 540 pt. per mark. Sovereign held at \$18,350 with 1/4 centavo offered.

Oct. 2.—Rates unchanged, market quiet. Sovereign held at \$18,350, with 1/4 centavo offered.

Oct. 3.—Banking rates on Paris 440 pt., mercantile 441 pt. and 21 1/2 centavo rates remain unchanged and six per cent. apertures at 1/4 centavo.

Movement of the Stock Market from Sept. 29 to October 2nd inclusive.

SHARES COMPANY PRICE

1 Banco do Brasil 265,000  
100 C. Comercial 215,000  
300 do Comércio 150,000

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Kororé.—Is somewhat firm at \$18,300 @ \$18,300 per cwt. on the spot.

Lard.—Has declined on the spot to

100 lbs per cwt. for George Jenkins

375 " " " Wilcox

375 " " " Wilcox

Rosin.—Remained quiet at \$18,000 @ \$18,000 per barrel.

SHIPPING NEWS.

## ARRIVALS OF FOREIGN VESSELS.

SEPTEMBER 23.

BRAZIL.—*Graça* (Asturias) 200 tons; *Melville* 70; *coal* to

*Uruguai*—*Br. lata* *Hernâni* 183 tons; *Principe* 100; *barrels* to

*Rondon*—*Br. lata* *Georges* 54 tons; *Congonha* 100; *barrels* to

*Oporto*—*Portuguese* 400; *lata* *Antônio* 150; *Arribeira* & *Co.*

ROSA DO SANTO.*Br. lata* *Kronprinz von Preussen* 100; *barrels* to

*Uruguai*—*Br. lata* *Almeida* 347 tons; *Coutinho* 160; *barrels* to

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